

**THE HOUSE OF GOD IN ASHES:**

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A

**SERMON,**

PREACHED

**IN ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, CHARLESTON,**

BEFORE

**THE CONGREGATION OF ST. PHILIP'S,**

ON

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20th, 1835;**

A DAY SET APART FOR

RELIGIOUS REFLECTION, HUMILIATION AND PRAYER,

IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE

***Destruction of their Church by Fire.***

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BY DANIEL COBIA,

Assistant Minister of St. Philip's Church.

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OF THE

ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH, CHARLESTON,

WAS COMMENCED, A. D. 1711.

FIRST USED FOR WORSHIP, A. D. 1723.

COMPLETED, A. D. 1733.

DESTROYED BY FIRE,

FEB. 15, A. D. 1835.

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Oh Salem, our once happy seat!  
When I of thee forgetful prove,  
Let then my trembling hand forget  
The speaking strings, with art to move!

If I to mention thee forbear,  
Eternal silence seize my tongue;  
Or if I sing one cheerful air,  
Till thy deliverance is my song!



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## S E R M O N .

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ISAIAH, LXIV. 11.

“OUR HOLY, AND OUR BEAUTIFUL HOUSE, WHERE OUR FATHERS PRAISED  
THEE, IS BURNED UP WITH FIRE.”

**S**UCH, Brethren, is the calamity which we have experienced, and such the lamentation which we have assembled to-day for the purpose of sending up to God. The prophet recounting the sorrows of the captive Israelites, has employed language affectingly descriptive of our own condition.

The words of the text had an emphasis of meaning, as they came from the lips of a Jew, sitting and weeping by the waters of Babylon, brooding with painful recollection over his country's desolations. His heart might well burst with emotion, as he thought on the towers and palaces, which once rose with such sacred and stately magnificence upon Zion's hill, and rendered Jerusalem, by all their delightful and consecrated associations, the object of his ardent affection, the city of his joy,—as he thought on them, now no longer bright and glorious to the eye of the beholder, but desolated and in ashes. The temple at Jerusalem had been worthy of his love. The loftiest monument—the proudest trophy of his country's past prosperity—of the piety of his ancestors—of the peculiar favour and presence of his God, associations the most sacred clustered around its every court—its every tower. Age after age had the nations admired the grandeur of its costly architecture, and his compatriots triumphed in its possession as their noblest inheritance. Age after age had the daily incense ascended



up to heaven from its consecrated enclosures, and the visible symbols of Jehovah's presence been preserved within its sanctuary. Age after age had his fathers gone thither to worship, greeting with joyous response the trumpet's sound, which called them to its courts, to offer the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and to invoke the blessing of the God of Abraham. The narrative of its erection furnished his country's history with its brightest page; the rehearsal of its praises supplied a theme for his loftiest and most enraptured song. And now that temple was in ashes. From the land of his captivity he could not transport himself in imagination within its sacred precincts, and find an alleviation of his own distress in the comfortable assurance that the house of God was safe. His personal sorrows were heightened to a new and yet more painful intensity by the remembrance that this monument of former greatness, this hallowed and time-honoured scene of his devotion, had been given up to the ravages of the devouring flame. He hung his harp upon the willows, and in a strain of unbroken lamentation, poured fourth the fulness of his heart to God. *"Be not wroth very sore, O Lord! neither remember iniquity for ever; behold! see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people. Thy holy cities are a wilderness; Zion is a wilderness; Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised thee, is burned up with fire, and all our pleasant things are laid waste."*

There is an affecting sanctity in such grief as this, my Brethren, which warrants its indulgence, and gives it even for its own sake a claim upon our sympathy. There may have been a selfish pride, and an overweening attachment in the heart of the Israelite for the temple at Jerusalem. From being the heaven-selected scene of his devotion, it may have become the object of his idolatry. But there was, in his affection for that holy place, too near an alliance to the sentiment of piety to give to his sorrow a claim to aught else than our respect and our condolence. It was the house of the Lord his God—his holy, beautiful, venerable house;

and he did well to lament, when it was laid in ruins. We, however, need not be reminded of his claims upon our sympathy. The choice—the ability, is not left us to withhold it, for we, alas! are called to be partakers of his sad calamity. Like him, we had an house, holy and beautiful, wherein our fathers worshipped. Like him, the thought of that house was associated in our hearts with all our best, and holiest, and most cherished emotions. Like him, it was the object of our most delighted gaze; the subject of our loudest, fondest, most untiring eulogy. Like him, we have been called to behold it, all holy and beautiful and venerable as it was, burned up with fire. Like him, the calamity has brought us afflicted and humbled into the presence of our God. And may God, indeed, be found of us, whilst in this hour of our distress we seek him with the accents of earnest supplication!

It would be at once to insult and to trifle with your feelings, Brethren, should I enter at large into a consideration of the calamity which God in his wisdom has called us to sustain. As Christians, we cannot fail to regard it as a visitation from his hand. It is not for us to determine whether it be sent on us as a judgment for our past unfaithfulness, or for the present trial and exercise of our faith. Whatever in the counsel of God may be its occasion and its purpose, the sympathy of the whole community is with us, whilst we feel and acknowledge that the calamity is great. We, Brethren of the Congregation, are the more immediate sufferers; but there is not an individual who does not realize that we are called to lament, not for a private, but a public loss. All felt that they possessed a common interest in that venerable edifice, whose mouldering ruins stand yet before us, bearing upon them the affecting traces of its former beauty. It was dear to the *patriot*; for it was full of the choicest associations connected with the history of his country's freedom, and its monumental marble bore many a record of the worth of those, whose talents, and virtues, and



efforts threw over the days of her infancy so bright a lustre. It was dear to the *Christian of every name*; for it stood an ancient monument of some of the first and noblest efforts which were made to give to the Gospel of Jesus an abiding habitation in our land; its walls had echoed the voices of some of the earliest and most faithful Missionaries who came to our shores with the tidings of salvation. But to the *children of the Church*, it was doubly, indescribably dear. There slept the dust of those, who for six score years had lived and died in the possession of a common faith and hope, had joined in the same sublime devotions, listened to the same inspired instructions, and at the same altar feasted on the memorials of the same redeemer's love. There amidst the tombs of their fathers, walking in the way in which their fathers trod, they were accustomed to bow themselves with reverence before the God their fathers worshipped. They felt it to be holy ground. It was a memorial of the parental care of the Church from which their fathers sprung, and of the fidelity of her children in the maintenance and preservation of the faith. There in infancy they had been consecrated to God in Holy Baptism. There in childhood, they had gathered a happy group around the man of God, to be taught the privileges and the obligations connected with the Christian name. There in youth, in the presence of God, and angels, and men, they had sworn allegiance from their hearts for time and for eternity, to their Redeemer and their Lord. There the dearest of all their earthly bonds had been sealed. And there had they gathered around the remains of those they loved, and wept, and prayed, before they consigned them to the silence of the tomb. All these holy associations are now, my Brethren, in the recollections of the past. And we are now without a temple, in which we may meet together as aforetime for the worship of our God. The idea of our loss is joined with the anticipation of the inconveniences and privations, to which we must of necessity for a season be subjected.



There is but one sentiment amongst us, that our calamity is great. Let us humbly endeavour in dependance on God's blessing, to improve the visitation to our spiritual good!

THE SPIRIT *it should lead us to exercise—*

THE DUTIES *to which it especially calls us—*  
will furnish appropriate and profitable subjects of reflection.

I. *What then, is THE SPIRIT which it becomes us to exercise under this afflicting visitation?*

None can doubt for a moment, that it calls for a *spirit of cheerful submission to the will of God*. We may not question that it is a dispensation of his Providence; and the dispensations of his Providence, dark as they may be, and inscrutable to us alike as to their occasion and their final purpose, reason, experience and scripture unite in assuring us, are regulated always by infinite wisdom and infinite benevolence. We may wonder at his doings: in mute amazement our ignorance and dim short-sightedness may stand confounded at the contemplation of the way he takes; but still "*the Lord is King:*" "*he doeth according to his will amidst the armies of heaven, and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?*" It is unbelief to question for a moment the correctness of his proceedings; it is base ingratitude to doubt for a moment the mercy and goodness which prompt and regulate his every act. By his word and his works we know enough of the benevolence, which he claims as his glorious and darling attribute; and knowing this—knowing too, that he is a God who changeth not, who regulates all his dispensations by principles fixed and immutable as his own character;—we are wholly inexcusable, if in the darkest hour, we do join with Eli in the language of devout submission—"*It is the Lord, let him do unto me what seemeth him good.*" There might be room for discontent—there might be an excuse for murmuring, if with the blind credulity of the infidel we could believe, that the Creator has left all things

to the jeopardy of chance, or contented himself with barely exercising over his creation a general superintendence. But the judicious and reflecting observer of what passes upon earth, cannot fail to discover the hand of God regulating the minutest as well as the most prominent event. And what saith the Scripture? "*Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and not one of them shall fall to the ground without your father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not, therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows.*" The argument for cheerful submission then, is as simple as it is conclusive. The character of God—the connection of God's providence with every event which befalls us, whether private or public, whether affecting our individual or our social interests, alike convince us that the exercise of that spirit of submission is as reasonable as it is obligatory. In the application of that argument to ourselves I need not speak. God in his providence has visited us grievously; but still it is God; it is he who hath made us, whose people we are, and the sheep of his pasture. And even though we may not discover the immediate purpose for which it has been suffered to befall us, yet it is the part of the Christian to realize that there is "a needs be," even for this sad calamity, and that it is alike his interest and duty to listen to the voice which says to him—"Be still; and know that I am God." If you would profit then, Brethren, by this visitation of his hand, cherish, I beseech you, this spirit of cheerful submission to his sovereign will!

But we may not rest here. The Christian must feel, that the spirit whose exercise this calamity requires, is *a spirit also of penitent humiliation*. Severe as it may be, we ought not to escape from the conviction that we deserved the stroke. "*In the time of adversity, consider.*" If we are yielding ourselves at all to the inquiry, why that stroke has been inflicted—are we not bound to examine whether the cause may not be found in the history of our own unfaithfulness? If God has designed to bring us by this calamity to the recollection



of our sins, can we safely neglect to listen to the voice of solemn admonition? Even though it be not a judgment, and no more than an act of salutary discipline, yet may we not refuse to call to remembrance how greatly we deserved the visitation. If the ashes of that ruined temple could speak, or if voice were given to its now desolated walls, what a testimony might they not urge against us of ingratitude and unfaithfulness? There we enjoyed privileges numerous and inestimable; but how did we value them, and to what extent were they improved? There was the house of God; but did it prove to us the gate of heaven? There was the altar of God; but did we encompass that altar with the sacrifices of devout thanksgiving? There stood the Minister of God; but did the tidings of salvation which he there proclaimed prove to our souls the savour of life unto life? There we were consecrated to God's service; but what allegiance have we rendered to him, and how have we lived to the glory of his name? There were we continually invited in the language of sublime devotion to lift up our hearts; but was ours the incense of a spiritual devotion, and did we never content ourselves with the service of the lips? There the Spirit of Grace hovered in love over the holy convocation; but did not the obstinate indifference of some compel him to exclaim, as Jesus of old to the inhabitants of Palestine—" *Oh! Jerusalem! Jerusalem! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her brood under her wings, and ye would not?*" May not that indifference have been to us as to them, the occasion of the sentence—" *Behold! your house is left unto you desolate!*"—The recollection of the past, even with the most faithful amongst us, must be crowded with acts of omission, with the neglect at least, if not with the actual abuse, of these peculiar and inestimable privileges. And surely, Brethren, now that God has been pleased by this painful visitation, to call our ways to remembrance, it becomes us in view of the past to exercise a spirit of deep and penitent humiliation. - Con-

trasting the blessings which we have enjoyed within the precincts of that ruined sanctuary, with the manner in which we have received, and improved them, we may, indeed, exclaim—“*Righteousness belongeth unto thee, O Lord! but unto us shame and confusion of face.*” In the possession of such blessings, to what a height of Christian excellence should not our characters have been advanced? What a flood of spiritual light should there not have been poured forth from the worshippers in that temple upon a world which lieth in wickedness? And how, have we met the responsibility in which our mercies involved us? “*Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God.*”

Once more. The dispensation we deplore should be met in the exercise of *a spirit of confiding faith*. Our interests are still the object of His care, who has blessed us hitherto with such abundant blessings. The recollection of all his former mercies, whilst it fills our hearts with gratitude, should prompt us to repose on him for the future our unhesitating trust. Events like that which now occupies our thoughts, teach us the vanity of placing on any other than him our confidence and hope. There is nothing on earth which is worth of our reliance; there is nothing which can endure uninjured the shocks of time, or escape from the calamities to which in the providence of God all earthly things are subject. But “*they that trust in the Lord shall be even as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, even so is the Lord round about his people, from this time forth for ever more.*” “*Trust ye in the Lord for ever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.*” It is the Church of God, which is suffering; it is the temple of God, which is made desolate, and the altar of God, which has been thrown down; and it is for this—for this chiefly, Christian Brethren, that we are called to mourn. But consider, and be comforted and animated by the consideration, that it is God himself, who has given us the assurance of his continual protection—it is God, who has invited us to repose on him.



our trust. It is the Lord who is the head, and the preserver of his Church—who has promised to keep her as the apple of his eye—who has said that he has graven her upon the palms of his hands. His temple may be in ruins; but the Lord still reigneth; still he offers himself to be the portion of his people. The Church which he hath purchased with his own precious blood, though she be driven into the wilderness, and spoiled of all her beauteous apparel, shall still be the object of his tenderest love. “*Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea*”—saith the Lord—“*they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.*” “*For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer.*” Cheered by such promises as these, my Brethren, even in this dark hour we may lift up our eyes to God in a spirit of confident and joyful faith. We may be afflicted, but we are not forsaken; we may be cast down, but we are not destroyed. The spiritual Zion still stands secure, guarded by God’s omnipotence and Christ’s unchanging love; and casting our cares on him, trusting that He who has smitten will also bind us up, we may proceed to the performance of the duties, which in this season of our calamity especially demand our care.

II. WHAT ARE THOSE DUTIES? *This is the second topic proposed for your consideration.*

First in order, and not the least in its importance, is a *steadfast adherence to the faith and the principles which we have hitherto professed.* The change to which our outward circumstances have been subjected should produce no change in our attachment to the Church. Her claims on our confidence and affections are too durable to be affected by any accident of time. The storm of affliction instead of sweeping us away, should only serve to exhibit the strength of our foun-

datations. But in this hour of calamity the nature and extent of our affection must be tried. It is at such a time as this, that the question must be settled, whether our fondness for the institutions which our fathers loved and cherished, is the result of accident or of choice—whether it has sprung out of a regard for personal convenience, or whether its origin may be traced to a deep and abiding principle. Now that Zion is despoiled of her towers and palaces, we may determine how much of the affection we bore to her arose purely and simply from the love of God. Now, then, if ever, duty demands of us a steadfast adherence to our principles and our faith. Now that there is little remaining save our principles and our faith to bind our hearts together, it becomes us especially to prove that we feel the strength of those enduring bonds. Now it becomes us to bear explicit testimony, because now more than ever, that testimony will be received—that our attachment to the institutions which we have hitherto supported, is not prejudiced but rational; that it springs out of an estimate of their own intrinsic excellence, and a just and holy regard for the authority of God. And shall we not do it, Brethren? Shall one be found wanting in a cause so noble? Hold fast, then, I beseech you, the profession of your faith without wavering. Being knit together in principle, there will soon be an unity of feeling and of effort. And building yourselves up on your most holy faith, the Lord of Hosts himself will be in the midst of you, and will not withhold his blessing.

The occasion should lead us also to *a diligent attendance on the means of grace, under whatever circumstances we may be permitted to enjoy them.* The delightful associations which have been hitherto connected with an attendance on these means, we shall no longer experience. That venerable edifice which was wont to cast a new solemnity over the solemn worship of the Lord most high, shall no longer be the scene of our devotions, or echo the tidings of salvation from the lips of Christ's ambassadors. Long time must elapse ere



another shall have been reared on its foundation, and when it has been erected, it will not, it cannot be as the first. But ere the top-stone has been laid on it, we, my Brethren, may have been called to our account. We know not what a day may bring forth; and whilst the present still is ours, let me urge you to the faithful improvement of the opportunities we still possess. The House of God has fallen, but we still have the Gospel, and all the ordinances of our heaven-born faith, which gave that house its sanctity, and rendered it the vestibule of heaven. The privileges which are granted us have lost nothing of their value, though stripped of the circumstances under which we have hitherto delighted to enjoy them. God still is the hearer of prayer; and the sacrifice of praise he still receives as an acceptable oblation. The Ministers of the Cross will still be near you, with the waters of Baptism, and the memorials of Christ's redeeming love. The word of God will still be read; and the Gospel of Jesus still sounded in your ears, and still proved as ever, to be the power of God unto salvation. Whatever the circumstances under which these privileges shall be enjoyed, they are in themselves inestimable; their faithful improvement will conduce by the blessing of the Holy Ghost to the salvation of your souls; their neglect or abuse will only involve them in an aggravated condemnation. Oh! my Brethren, if you have never realized their value—if you have never improved them—improve them now. Now they stand before you in all their naked excellence: begin now to regard them as you ought, as possessing in themselves an unspeakable value, and employ them to the end for which they are given you by God. If you have hitherto been satisfied with walking in the way your fathers walked, and occupying the places which your fathers occupied, rest there no longer. The holy House, where our fathers worshipped, is in ruins; but, blessed be God! we worship one who dwelleth not in temples made with hands; and we may still set up our tabernacle; and God may still

be with us, and pour down on us his blessing! Wherever that tabernacle is set up, there let us meet together—there let us worship—there let us celebrate a Saviour's love—there let us listen to the heavenly message. Let us begin to value these things for their own sakes, and to value them the more, as being all that now remains to us. My Brethren, suffer me to urge this the most earnestly, as it is this which presses with a double weight of anxiety on us, who in the providence of God are set as the watchmen of your souls. We share in the calamity which you have suffered, and in the grief which it has occasioned, you have our largest sympathy. But the regret for the loss, which we experience, is heightened by another and a greater care. We are set to watch for your souls, and we fear the effect which may attend on this calamity by withdrawing you in some degree, at least, from our instructions and our efforts. We feel that one strong link has been broken, which has kept you together as a common household. We can no longer invite you to that venerable sanctuary, which of itself attracted you to worship in its courts. We can only appeal to you now by your sense of the value of your religious privileges, of the infinite importance of your soul's salvation. But we would urge that appeal with all the earnestness, which a love for yourselves, and a concern for the welfare of the cause of Christ can give. For your own sakes—for Christ's sake, neglect not, we beseech you, the instituted means of grace—neglect not the Gospel of God's blessed Son. In your attendance on them hereafter, we know that you will be subjected to a degree of inconvenience—an inconvenience which you will experience more sensibly, because it will contrast so directly with all your former privileges. But as you have a God to glorify—a Lord to serve—as you have souls to be saved, and an account to render at the day of judgment, I beseech you, Brethren, let the inconvenience and sacrifice be what it may, neglect not the faithful improvement of all your means of grace. Let not your



absence from the worship of God, and the preaching of his word, countenance and encourage the indifference of others, and sadden the hearts and paralyze the efforts of those, whose very love for your souls fills them already with the most anxious care.

Another duty to which the occasion calls us, is *the manifestation of an unity of feeling, and a zealous co-operation in every effort to promote the interests of our Congregation, and to restore our ruined edifice.* If ever a harmony of feeling and of action was necessary, surely it is now. If ever Jerusalem had need to be a city at unity with itself, surely that need exists amongst ourselves. God be praised, that in this particular we have little cause for apprehension! But if brotherly love exists, let us by united efforts effectually resolve, that brotherly love continue. The occasion demands that each should exert himself to the utmost in the zealous promotion of the common cause. In the princely munificence of a former generation we have long participated; and their example has charged us with a debt to posterity, which the providence of God has called us now to pay; and who will withhold the tribute of gratitude for the past, and pious interest for the welfare of the future? Who will not be ready, even at the sacrifice of personal comfort, and personal convenience to give his heart and his hand to a cause so sacred, so noble, and so dear? Take for a pattern, my Brethren, the zeal of Israel of old, their personal labours, their unbounded liberality, when their temple was to be built, or when, after its destruction, it was again to be reared upon its broad foundations. Be your conduct excited by their stimulating example! As your voices have been united in the worship of our God, so let your efforts be now united in rearing a lasting monument to the glory of his name. With such a spirit and such a resolution, it shall not be long, ere that sacred edifice shall once again be reared—ere the voice of thanksgiving shall again resound within its walls—ere you shall kneel again around an altar

which you may call your own,—and listen again each in his own accustomed place, to the joyful message of Christ's great salvation. Who will not be animated by the prospect, to zealous and vigorous exertion? Who that loves the cause of Christ—who that loves the Church, the appointed instrument by which that cause must be promoted—who that mourns over the loss which we have now sustained, will not cheerfully sacrifice every private consideration to further the attainment of so great a good?

But above all things, Brethren, the occasion demands *our urgent and importunate supplications for the help of God*. It is in this season of darkness and distress, that we are made to feel most sensibly our need of his assistance. Now that he has humbled us, it is time for us to seek him. Now that he has spoiled us of our earthly pride and confidence, it is time for us to draw near to him, and to make the Lord our trust. If it be so that he has dealt with us in anger, it is ours by the earnestness of our petitions to avert his wrath. If it be our unfaithfulness and ingratitude, which has brought down the judgment, it is time for us to acknowledge our transgressions, and to implore through the merits of Jesus, the timely exercise of his forgiving mercy. If it be simply for the trial of our faith, to wean us from earthly confidences, and to call us to the exercise of Christian grace—we have yet need to pray, that strength may be given us to bear the trial, that we may be enabled to receive and to profit by the wholesome discipline. Whatever be the occasion and the purpose of the visitation, it should lead us with one consent to the mercy-seat of God. It is there and there only that we may convert the affliction to a blessing. It is there, by our urgent and believing supplications, that we may call forth a display of his loving-kindness and his power, which shall more than compensate for our every loss. The spirit of submission to his sovereign will—the spirit of humiliation for our past unfaithfulness—the spirit of faith in his most gracious promises—all lead our footsteps to his throne of grace. It



will be vain for us to hold tenaciously to the principles which we have professed—it will be vain to attend with the most scrupulous regularity on all the means of grace—it will be vain with the most costly liberality to rebuild the House of God—unless we do it in dependence on his help, without whom we can do nothing—and from whom proceedeth “every good and perfect gift.” When his temple was in ashes, and his nation all in exile, the Israelite felt that the Lord alone could be his refuge; and when he poured out before him the fulness of his troubled soul, he was heard and delivered. Let us be influenced, my Brethren, by his example. In the midst of calamity, let us join with the prophet, in expressing the sorrows of his heart to God. We have need to obtain, and if we will but ask it, we have a right to expect from him a special blessing. We shall have earthly discouragements; but let us seek the more earnestly for comfort from above. We shall have a thousand temptations to faint and be weary; let us press with more restless importunity our plea for God’s assistance. We can boast no longer of the distinction which we have hitherto enjoyed, as the worshippers in that beautiful and ancient edifice, the pride of our community, the honour of our State; let us obtain through the merits of Christ by our pleadings at the mercy-seat, a distinction still more honourable, and of incomparably greater value—the distinction of being the special and the favoured objects of God’s enlivening and sanctifying grace.

Brethren of the Congregation! let me summon you to prayer. The calamity we suffer speaks to you from God, and calls you to urgent and believing prayer, with a voice too loud to be unneeded, too plain to be misunderstood. *Pray for yourselves*—for pardoning, sanctifying, strengthening grace. Devote yourselves henceforward more heartily than ever, to the service of your God—the God who claims you for his own, who has blessed you so long, and is still waiting to be gracious; but pray that the blood of his Son

may wash out your past offences, and that his Spirit may assist you in the fulfilment of your holy resolutions. *Pray for your Ministers*—they need your prayers. Without those prayers, and the blessing which will follow them, their planting and watering will be alike in vain. In this hour of darkness they need more than ever the consolation and succour of the Holy Ghost; your prayers must bring it. Now more than ever, they need to be faithful in duty and diligent in their exertions. From your sympathy and intercessions they must obtain the strength. “Brethren pray for us.” It is the command of an Apostle; but it comes home to you now, with all the affecting impressiveness with which a community of sorrow can invest it. *Pray also for those who are connected with yourselves in this household of faith.* Pray that a blessing from God may reach the hearts of all. We have the means of salvation still abundantly supplied to us; and oh! my Brethren, if you will but pray for it, the Spirit’s sacred influences may invest those means with such an heavenly power, that Christ may indeed be glorified amongst us, and that not one who partakes of them shall fail of life eternal. And who then, that has the heart of a Christian will withhold from it his best—his most ardent—his untiring supplications?

There is not, perhaps, an individual amongst us, who has stood by yonder ruins, that has not felt by anticipation what the Israelite experienced in laying the foundation of the second Temple. They that had seen the first house wept with a loud voice when the foundation of this house was laid, so great was the contrast—so impossible was it for the second to rival the grandeur and beauty which the first displayed. And yet it was predicted, that the glory of the latter house should be greater than the former: and the prediction was fulfilled. The first Temple was glorious in its magnificence, and it was honoured with the symbols of Jehovah’s presence; the second displayed but little comparatively of earthly decoration; but within its courts the in-



carnate Jehovah was himself beheld. So may it be with ours ; so, Brethren, let us resolve by our prayers to God to make it ! We may not replace the memorials of a former age, nor restore in its beauty the monumental marble which adorned its walls ; but we may do it a higher and a nobler service ; we may call down upon it the special blessing of the Lord most high ; we may fill it with the living, speaking monuments of God's subduing grace ; we may invoke the Almighty to make it his constant and his choice abode ; we may draw on it from the fountain of celestial day so plenteous a flood of spiritual light, as shall cause it to shine forth to the glory of the Lord, and to pour out abundantly its gladdening beams for the life and salvation of a world of darkness ! We need not wait, my Brethren, for the coming of that day, until we have rebuilt our fallen temple. Even now the call is addressed to us, to seek unto the Lord and to secure the blessing. *“Awake, awake, put on thy strength, oh Zion ! shake thyself from the dust, arise, and sit down, oh Jerusalem ! loose thyself from the bands of the neck, oh captive daughter of Zion ! For thus saith the Lord—ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money. Break forth into joy ; sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem ! for the Lord hath comforted his people—he hath redeemed Jerusalem.”*

## NOTE.

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### ST. PHILIP'S CHURCH.

*The following accurate and finished Description is extracted from  
Mill's Statistics of South-Carolina, pp. 404-5.*

“ St. Philip's Church (built of brick and stuccoed to resemble stone) exhibits more of design in its arrangement than any other of our ancient buildings erected here. The site is a little above Queen-street, and looking directly down Church-street. The general outline of the plan presents the form of a cross, the foot of which, constituting the nave, is seventy-four feet long and sixty-two feet wide. The arms form the vestibule, tower, and porticoes at each end, projecting twelve feet beyond the sides, and surmounted by a pediment. The head of the cross is a portico of four massy square pillars, (intercolumniated with arches,) surmounted with their regular entablature and crowned with a pediment. Over this portico, and behind it, rise two sections of an octagon tower, (the lower containing the bell, the upper the clock) crowned with a dome, and quadrangular lanthorn and vane. The height of this tower entire, with its basement, is 113 feet. The sides of this edifice are ornamented with a series of pilasters of the same order with the portico columns, (which are Tuscan,) each of the spaces pierced with a single lofty aperture as a window. The roof is partially hid by a balustrade which runs round it.

The interior of this Church in its whole length, presents an elevation of a lofty double arcade, supporting upon an entablature, a vaulted ceiling in the middle. The piers are ornamented with fluted Corinthian pilasters rising to the top of the arches, the key stones of these arches are sculptured with a cherubim in relief; over the centre arch, on the south side, are some figures in heraldic form, representing the infant colony imploring the protection of the king. Beneath the figures is this inscription:—*Propius res aspice nostras* : (which has been adopted as the motto of the seal of the Church.) Over the middle arch, on the north side, is this inscription: *Deus mihi Sol*, with armorial bearings. The pillars are now ornamented on their face with beautiful pieces of monumental sculpture, some of them with bass-relief, and some with full figures, finely executed by the first artists in England and this country.



“ At the end of the nave is the chancel, (within the body however of the Church,) and at the West end is the organ, which is an ancient piece of furniture imported from England, and which had been used at the coronation of George the Second.\*

“ The galleries were added some time subsequent to the building of the Church. It is to be regretted that the steeple of this venerable edifice was not furnished with its spire, as was evidently at first intended; and that the interior grandeur of its massy arcades has been disturbed by the introduction of galleries, which never constituted a part of the original design.

“ The effect produced upon the mind in viewing this edifice is that of solemnity and awe, from its massy character: when you enter under its roof, the lofty arches, porticoes, arcades, and pillars which support it, cast a sombre shade over the whole interior, and induce the mind to serious contemplation, and religious reverence. In every direction the monuments of departed worth and excellence gleam upon the sight; every object tends to point to the final state of all mundane grandeur; and impels the mind to look beyond the tomb for that permanency of being and happiness, which in the natural constitution of things cannot exist here.

“ It would carry us far beyond the limits of this work were we to notice every interesting object connected with this venerable edifice. St. Philip's Church is the most ancient of those now standing here. It was founded in 1711. Divine service was performed in it in 1723. The main body of the Church was finished 1728, and the steeple in 1733.”

\* This organ was removed about a year since, and another, manufactured by Mr. Erben of New-York, of magnificent appearance and exquisit tone, placed in its stead.

